

Why Handsome Women Seldom Have Pretty Daughters

Science Now Makes the Surprising Assertion That Pretty Girls Have Their Fathers to Thank, Because Beauty Is Perpetuated

By Rene Bache.

SCIENCE has been investigating beauty and has discovered some surprising and interesting facts about that most desirable human quality.

Perhaps the most remarkable conclusions reached are that "beauty usually descends through the male line rather than the female and that a mother does not ordinarily transmit her beauty to her daughters." These conclusions are the result of a line of research pursued by the heredity experts of the Carnegie Institution and other scientists.

One prominent beauty expert summarized the facts observed by him as follows:

(1) That it is a matter of common ob-

servation, open to everybody's notice, that the daughters of beautiful women do not average higher in respect of looks than the generality in girls.

(2) That it is equally a matter of common observation that the daughters of notably handsome men are likely to inherit their fathers' beauty.

Right at the start it is interesting to find that this inheritance of human beauty follows the same rule as egg production among hens, in several questions of human heredity much valuable information has been obtained by studying the humble farmyard population.

It has been definitely ascertained through multitudes of experiments with fowls that the good layer does not bequeath her power to her daughters. This, indeed, has been the principal obstacle to the development of high record breeds. It is to her sons that she transmits the power of high egg production. Being roosters, they cannot lay eggs, but they hand the power down to their daughters. Therefore it has been found that the best way to build up a flock of good layers is to get a rooster whose mother was a first-class layer and then to keep on with the same idea in the development of the flock. The exceptional egg-laying quality never stays in the female line. It persistently crosses back into the male line, through which it is perpetuated. The same rule applies to human beauty. It persistently crosses back to the male line and is not transmitted directly from mother to daughter, but there are complications in this transmission, some of which will be explained later.

The heredity experts say it is surprising how few beautiful women have equally beautiful daughters of the same general type. Think of all the cases in point that you can see and how this rule applies. It would be going too far to say that a mother never bequeaths her good looks to her daughter, but such cases are very exceptional. It is the same as with the hens. The exceptionally good egg-layer's daughter does not fail to lay eggs, but she does not rise above the average.

Further, the heredity experts say that in most of those exceptional cases where a beautiful mother has beautiful daughters it will be found that the latter inherited their beauty from their father and that they are of a different physical type from the mother.

The heredity experts speak of certain persons as "carriers" (by inheritance) of specific traits or characteristics. Thus, in a more general way, women are carriers of beauty from generation to generation. But they transmit it through their sons.

Take the case of a woman who has inherited beauty from her father. If she marries a homely man, her daughters will not be good looking. But the daughters of her sons will, in all likelihood, be pretty, inheriting their looks from her—the grand-

mother—and from her grandfather before her.

The proposition, however, is much more complex than the above statement would suggest. There is such a thing as what might be called, in a family, a "double dose" of beauty—a sort of dose that any girl might be glad to take. What does that signify?

Well, for example, suppose the case of a woman who has inherited beauty from her father. She marries a man whose mother enjoyed a like inheritance. There you have a double dose of beauty. All of the offspring of the marriage, both daughters and sons, will be handsome.

Beauty (say the heredity experts) has two ways of descent in human beings. It

may run straight down the male line, from father to son and grandson, and beyond; or it may "jump across."

The "jump across" (which is the more usual thing) is illustrated by the case of the handsome father who bequeaths good looks to his daughter. She cannot transmit them—though how glad she would be to do so—to her daughters. But she passes them back to her sons, whose daughters reproduce the beauty of their paternal grandmother.

In such a case the trait of beauty jumps across from the male to the female, and then jumps back again—to reappear by a return jump in the next generation of girls. But, none the less, it is the male sex that preserves and transmits the attributes of feminine pulchritude.

There could surely be no more curious paradox. But nature is full of such seeming absurdities. The point here emphasized is that a girl cannot inherit beauty from her mother unless the latter has acquired the quality by inheritance from her own father.

Men transmit feminine beauty, handing it down from generation to generation; women serve merely as "carriers." It is the male human being, in other words, that is responsible for the perpetuation of this attribute, deemed by all females of the species to be the most desirable. He thus engenders the means of his own undoing; for women's beauty is the power he is least able to resist.

It is, then, to be inferred that the perpetuation of beauty in women is one of the most important, though unconscious, aims of masculine inheritance. Its success is, in a degree, controlled by conditions far more complex than might at first glance be supposed.

The individual man (as often happens) may have no beauty to give to his daughters. It is not his fault, but a misfortune of his ancestry. One notes that plain women run in families. On the other hand, if he be handsome, he may bequeath his good looks to some of his daughters, and not to others.

Again, in such a case, it is a matter of heredity. He may inherit comeliness from his mother (derived from her father), and yet his own father may have been a homely man. In him the homeliness of his father does not appear; it is a "hidden" trait. But in some of his daughters it reappears.

This explains the fact that in some families there are pretty sisters and plain sisters. It often, indeed, commonly happens that way.

But suppose that the father has a "double dose" of beauty, derived from handsome male ancestors and a mother whose father was notably good-looking. In that case every one of his daughters will be pretty. It is a sure thing.

In this country, the most famous family of beautiful women is that of the Lang-

by the Male--
Not by the Female

Chart Showing How Beauty Is Transmitted.

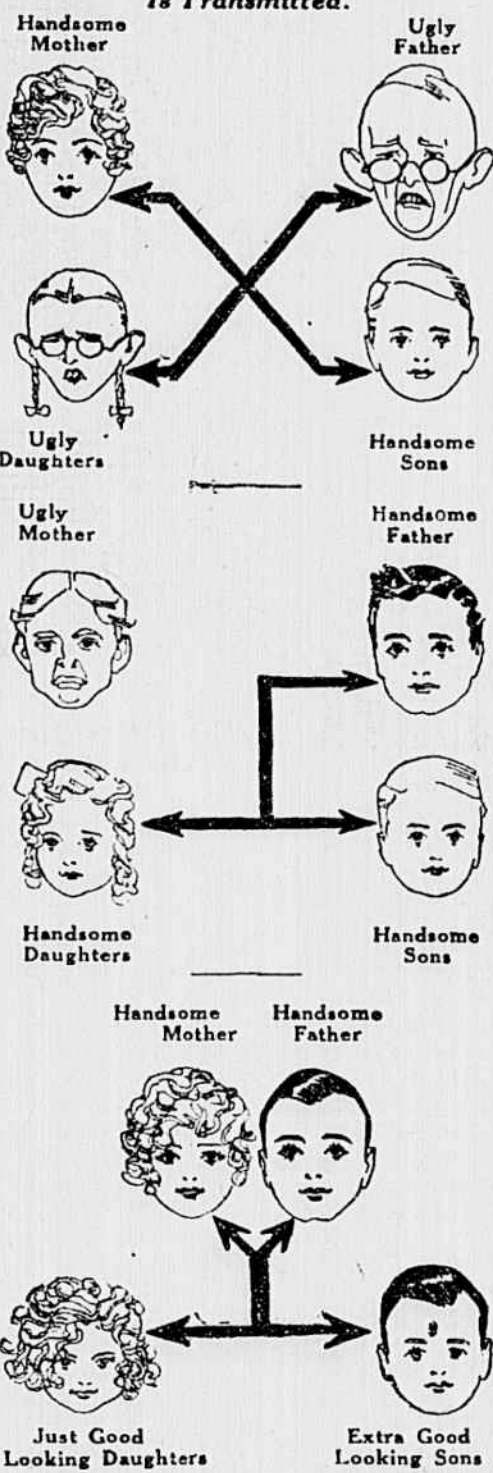


Photo Otto Sarony Co.

hornes of Virginia. One of them married Charles Dena Gibson; another is the wife of young Waldorf Astor, now an officer in the British army. There were five of them, and they could not help being beautiful, for their father was a very handsome man, and their mother the daughter of a race which in the male line had had a reputation for exceptionally good looks for at least half a dozen generations.

Here was a conspicuous case of a complex inheritance of beauty. On the other hand, of course, there are plenty of instances of a double dose of homeliness—which would satisfactorily account for the run of plain women, generation after generation, in many a family.

Summed up, the idea is this: If a man has a single dose of beauty, he may expect to bequeath it to half his daughters. If he have a double dose, he may be confident that all of them will be beautiful.

Now, the moral of all this is sufficiently obvious, in its application to matrimony. If a woman would insure pulchritude for her girls yet to be born, she ought to pick out a husband (if possible) whose grandfathers on both sides of the family were good looking.

Anybody's immediate and personal observation will furnish plenty of support for the statements of fact herein set forth. Take, for illustration, any family that you know wherein there are a number of children. Are the girls good-looking, and the boys not? In that case take note of the father. He is a handsome man, is he not? And the mother—is she not rather decidedly plain?

Nothing is more common than to see an ugly man with a beautiful sister. But can you think off-hand of any markedly homely man whose daughters are notably handsome?

Such a thing does happen occasionally, through accidents of inheritance, but it is unusual. And, where it occurs, you will find that the man's father, or perhaps his mother's father, was handsome. In him beauty is a "latent," or hidden, characteristic. But it is there—in the male strain—and inevitably reappears in at least some of the daughters, from generation to generation.

Who has not heard of the Gunning—the most celebrated beauties of modern times? Their father, John Gunning, was a penniless Irishman but extraordinarily handsome. His good looks won the love and hand of a daughter of the sixth Viscount Mayo.

Two girls born of this marriage, Marie, and Elizabeth, were taken by their mother to London in 1750. They quickly became the rage. So remarkable was their beauty that crowds followed them on the streets. Seven hundred people stood all one night.

Copyright, 1918, by the Star Company. Great Britain Rights Reserved.



Lillian Russell and Her Daughter.

A conspicuous case of a well-known American beauty who did not transmit her features of face or coloring to her daughter. Lillian Russell is a pronounced blond; her daughter is a brunette and resembles Fred Solomon, her father.



The Deposed Czarina, Her Four Daughters and Her Son.

This illustrates the Beauty Inheritance Rule Strikingly. The Czarina Is Handsome and Has Regular Features. Her Four Daughters, While Not Displeasing, Have Irregular Features, Do Not Resemble Their Mother in Any Way but Are Like Their Father, While the Only Son Inherits His Mother's Good Looks.

(Outside an inn to see Elizabeth get into her coach in the morning. She became Duchess of Hamilton, and afterwards Duchess of Argyll. Maria married the Earl of Coventry. Both were penniless and so devoid of education as to be actually ignorant, but the good looks inherited from their father enabled them to make great matches.)

Take the case of the most famous beauty in history—which rank is traditionally accorded to Cleopatra. There were a good many Cleopatras, this name being a common one in the Ptolemy family, the members of which customarily intermarried among themselves. But, of course, it is the last one of the dynasty, the Serpent of the Nile, that is here spoken of.

Where did she get her looks?

Well, the original Ptolemy was one of the generals of Alexander the Great and, according to good evidence, a brother of the conqueror. When the conqueror died the empire he had created began to fall to pieces. Ptolemy was sent to Egypt as governor, and not long afterward he declared himself king.

This Ptolemy was a very skillful military leader and was also reputed the handsomest man of his day. The dynasty he founded lasted nearly 300 years and was remarkable for good looks—barring the seventh king, who was called the "Bloated" because of disfigurement by intemperance. The ninth king, Ptolemy Auletes, is said to have been astonishingly handsome, though effeminate.

Ptolemy Auletes was the father of the

Serpent of the Nile, of whom it has been said that if her nose had been half an inch shorter the face of the world would have been changed.

But (as it would appear) she owed her beauty to her father. So marvellous was her physical perfection that when a faithful serving man carried her secretly on his back in a sack through the palace at Alexandria and dumped her out before Caesar that susceptible gentleman was unable to resist her charms.

It is certainly odd. We speak of women as the "fair sex," but it is the male parent who bestows upon his daughters the gift of beauty. Not only the heredity expert, but the every-day observation of us ordinary folks offers convincing testimony to the point.